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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/070,269	04/30/1998	DEREK J HARPER	P-7726	4260

7590

09/24/2003

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EXAMINER

KONTOS, LINA R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3763

DATE MAILED: 09/24/2003

14

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/070,269

Applicant(s)

HARPER, DEREK J

Examiner

Lina Kontos

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 June 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 June 2002 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 8
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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Drawings

1.

Figures 1-3 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

2.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the Luer axis closer to one of the anchoring protrusions than the other must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3.

Claims 1-3,6-10,12-23,26-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Brightbill.

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Brightbill discloses a hollow barrel (44) with an axis coaxial with the lumen. A connection protrusion (35), a pair of anchoring protrusions with a suturing hole (on 44), a female Luer connector (46,48,50) that has an axis that is not coaxial with the barrel axis that is coaxial with the lumen. The Luer connector on 48 has an axis (y-axis) that is not coaxial with the barrel axis that is coaxial with the lumen. Furthermore the Luer connector on 48 is equidistant to the anchoring protrusions. The Luer connectors on 46 and 50 are closer to one anchoring protrusion than another. The female Luer axis intersects the barrel axis at an angle of about 30 degrees (Figure 1, claim 1).

4.

Claims 1-6,9,19-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nordstrom.

Nordstrom teaches an indwelling catheter assembly having a main hollow body (4) with a protrusion for attaching to a catheter (2) on one end, and the other end having a Luer Lock element (5). The main body has wing elements (8) used for securing means to the patient and defining a planar axis. The Luer lock element is attached to the main body at an angle ($\alpha 1$) of 30 degrees intersecting said planar axis.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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5.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thompson in view of Brightbill.

Thompson et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed including a hollow barrel (24) with an axis coaxial with the lumen. A connection protrusion (16) with a bulbous end (Figure 1, near 18), a pair of anchoring protrusions (28) formed in a plane, a connector (26) that has an axis that is not coaxial with the barrel axis that is coaxial with the lumen. The connector has an axis (y-axis) that is not coaxial with the barrel axis that is coaxial with the lumen (Figures 1, 3). Thompson fails to teach the connector as a Luer connector.

Brightbill, as described above, teaches the use of a Luer connector as is standard procedure in the art to connect a variety of devices.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to make the connection in Brightbill of a Luer lock type in order to have versatility in connecting to various devices.

Response to Arguments

6.

In response to applicant's argument regarding the intended purpose of the device of Brightbill, it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

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7.

In response to applicant's argument regarding lack of motivation to combine the elements of the Brightbill and Thompson patents, the fact that applicant has recognized another advantage which would flow naturally from following the suggestion of the prior art cannot be the basis for patentability when the differences would otherwise be obvious. See *Ex parte Obiaya*, 227 USPQ 58, 60 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1985).

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the Examiner recognizes that references cannot be arbitrarily combined and that there must be some reason why one skilled in the art would be motivated to make the proposed combination of primary and secondary references. *In re Nomiya*, 184 USPQ 607 (CCPA 1975). However, there is no requirement that a motivation to make the modification be expressly articulated. The test for combining reference is what the combination of disclosures taken as a whole would suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re McLaughlin*, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). References are evaluated by what they suggest to one versed in art, rather than by their specific disclosures. *In re Bozek*, 165 USPQ 545 (CCPA) 1969. In this case as the use of Luer lock connections are standard in the art, it would have been obvious to employ this particular type of connection on the Thompson device.

8.

Applicant's arguments, see pages 4-6, filed June 11, 2002, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 4,5,24,25 under Brightbill have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Nordstrom, as noted above.

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Conclusion

8.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.


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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lina Kontos whose telephone number is (703) 306-4207. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached on (703) 308-3552. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9302 for regular communications and (703) 872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.

LRK
July 7, 2003


BRIAN L. CASLER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700